

# Welcome to CommuniChi Community Acupuncture!

We are delighted that you are interested in joining us! Please take a minute to read this introduction to our clinic and to our community.

## *What's different about CommuniChi?*

### **Community setting**

Most US acupuncturists treat each patient on a table in a private room. At CommuniChi, however, acupuncture treatments are given in a group setting, as is customary in Asia. In our clinic we group recliners in an open, shared space. Treating patients in a community setting has many benefits: it's easy for friends and family to come in for treatment together and sharing the healing experience makes individual treatments more powerful. Our style of acupuncture treats patients in recliners, allowing them to rest with their needles for an extended period of time. The "right" amount of time varies from patient to patient. Most people learn after a few treatments when they feel "done," whether this is twenty minutes or an hour or more. Many people fall asleep and wake feeling refreshed.

### **Affordable fees**

Most US acupuncturists see only one patient per hour per room and so must charge \$65 to \$175 per treatment. These prices limit who can use their services and how often they can use them. To make acupuncture affordable and still earn a living we have turned to more simplified approach: instead of asking you many questions, we rely on a few simple diagnostic techniques to decide how to treat you. Using simple but focused treatments, we can see many patients per hour with little talking, and effective results.

Please see the enclosed fee schedule. To keep our fees affordable, we cannot bill your insurance; the expense of dealing with insurance paperwork makes this impractical. If you have insurance that covers acupuncture, we can gladly give you a payment receipt that you can submit to your insurance company.

## *Our Commitment to You*

We want to make it possible for you to receive acupuncture regularly and long enough to get better and stay better. We want our community to welcome all different kinds of people. We want to give you the tools to take care of your own health so that you will not need to rely as heavily on medications or major medical interventions. We will provide a safe environment with skilled practitioners.

## *What We Need From You*

### **◆ Responsibility**

CommuniChi Community Acupuncture does not provide primary care medicine! If you think you have an uncommon problem (for example, you believe you might have a serious infection, a malignant growth, or an injury that will not heal), or if you want someone to review the details of your medical history, you need to see a primary care physician (MD, DO, ND, etc.) or an acupuncturist who will have the time to review these issues with you. We can provide some excellent, affordable referrals, even if you have no insurance coverage. Do not expect us to diagnose and treat a very serious condition. We *can* provide complementary care for serious conditions that require a physician's attention. But we need you to take responsibility for obtaining a primary care doctor when needed. In order for CommuniChi to continue providing our services to you and the rest of the community, patients need to pay for their treatments at the time of service (cash or check) unless other arrangements are made.

### **◆ Flexibility**

The community setting requires some flexibility from you. For instance, many patients have a favorite recliner. When we are busy, someone may be sitting in yours. Similarly, we have a few patients who snore. Other patients who dislike snoring bring earplugs to their treatments. Some of our patients even bring favorite pillows or blankets from home with them, because they prefer theirs to ours. That's fine with us. Basically, we need you to participate in making yourself comfortable in the community room before we arrive to treat you.

In terms of how long you want to stay -- tell the receptionist or acupuncturist when you check in if you need to be somewhere at a certain time. If you want to be unpinned at a specific time, please let us know. We'll make sure you're out on time. In general, if you feel done, open your eyes and make eye contact--if your eyes are closed, we think you're asleep and we won't wake you up.

#### ◆ **Community-Mindedness**

The soothing atmosphere in our clinic exists because all of our patients create it by relaxing together. This kind of calm and quiet is especially important in our too-busy lives. Maintaining this atmosphere of calm requires that no one talk very much in the treatment space. If you would like to speak to a practitioner one-on-one at any length, please let us know. If you want to have a substantial conversation, we will probably need to schedule that separately and might need to do it by phone.

If you have questions about acupuncture, please read the articles in our library, or consider purchasing a copy of the excellent book "*Acupuncture is Like Noodles*", on sale at the front desk. Unfortunately, we can't explain what every point does, or how acupuncture works, while we are treating you. Our Resource Center can answer many of the basic questions you may have. If you have questions, we'll happily give you plenty to read!

The success of our low cost model depends a great deal on you - the patient - helping to make our work easier by learning our systems. Please re-schedule and make payment with the receptionist before each treatment, so you can relax and enjoy the treatment. For safety, please wear your shoes walking to and from your chair. And of course, please turn off your cell phone; do not place them on vibrate. Out of respect for the chemical sensitivities of other patients, please avoid wearing perfumes, colognes, aftershave lotion, essential oils, or any heavily scented products.

Please also respect our 24 hour cancellation policy.

#### ◆ **Commitment**

Acupuncture is a PROCESS. It is rare for any acupuncturist to resolve a problem with one treatment. In China, a typical treatment protocol for a chronic condition could be acupuncture every other day for three months! Most of our patients don't need that much acupuncture but every patient requires a course of treatment rather than a single treatment to get what they want from acupuncture.

One big reason that we are able to keep our prices so low is because of the extraordinary amount of marketing our patients do on our behalf -- we don't have to advertise. We cannot express how grateful we are for this. Our patients are such effective marketers because they have first-hand experience of how well acupuncture works. All of our satisfied patients basically made a commitment to a course of treatment.

On your first visit, your acupuncturist will suggest a course of treatment, which can be anything from "we'd like to see you once a week for six weeks" to "we'd really like to see you every day for the next four days." This suggestion is based on our experience with treating different kinds of conditions. If you don't come in often enough or long enough, acupuncture probably will not work for you. The purpose of our fee schedule is to help you make that commitment. If you have questions about how long it will take to see results, please ask us, or if you think you need to adjust your treatment plan, please let us know. We need you to commit to the process of treatment in order to get good results.

And, last, but not least....enjoy the space. We hope that CommuniChi Acupuncture can be an important part of your community. Thank you,

**Jordan, Amber, Sam, Katie, Meredith, Upel, and Peter**